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Advancement of women

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 39/125 of 14 December 1984 and 50/166 of 22 December 1995.

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Annex

Report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, 1996

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I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a review and update on the programme of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and describes initiatives undertaken by the Fund in 1996. It also highlights the response of UNIFEM to the recommendations of the external evaluation of the Fund, including an overview of the new strategy and business plan, which is in part a result of the evaluation. The report also outlines work on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing in 1995 and with regard to General Assembly resolution 50/166 of 22 December 1995.

2. In its resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984, the General Assembly mandated UNIFEM to play an innovative and catalytic role in the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality. The Fund's mandate is: (a) to support innovative and experimental activities benefiting women, in line with national and regional priorities; (b) to serve as a catalyst, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream development activities; and (c) to play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations system of development cooperation.

3. In paragraph 335 of the Platform for Action,[a] the Fourth World Conference on Women affirmed the Fund's goal of increasing options and opportunities for the economic and political empowerment of women in developing countries, especially those living in poverty, so that they could contribute more effectively to and benefit from the development of their communities and countries.

4. UNIFEM has, since its inception, worked in developing countries in the regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In 1996, UNIFEM consulted with the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat to determine whether its mandate extended to work on women's empowerment in the Eastern European and Commonwealth of Independent States region. On the advice of the Office of Legal Affairs, the Consultative Committee of UNIFEM supported the expansion of the Fund's work into that region. UNIFEM is currently in the process of developing programmes in Eastern and Central Europe and the countries members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

II. Programme

A. Overview

5. The Beijing Platform for Action gave UNIFEM new energy and direction. The Platform for Action paved the way for UNIFEM to find its niche as a strategic organization within the United Nations system providing technical and advisory support to bring about women's economic and political empowerment. In 1996, UNIFEM shifted from its more traditional approach of being a broad-based "grant" awarding organization to providing strategic and technical "know-how" and support as a catalyst and mediator within the United Nations system and with Governments and women's organizations in managing and bringing about gender-responsive development.

6. To ensure optimal programme focus and effectiveness, UNIFEM concentrates on three thematic areas within the areas of political and economic empowerment: (a) strengthening women's economic capacity as entrepreneurs and producers, especially in the context of the new trade agendas and the emergence of new technologies; (b) engendering governance and leadership that will increase women's participation in decision-making processes that shape their lives and are responsive to the livelihood needs and realities of women and communities; and (c) promoting the recognition of women's rights and women's ability to exercise those rights and the elimination of violence against women to facilitate women's full participation in their societies.

7. In working towards the economic and political empowerment of women, UNIFEM uses five strategies in its work: (a) building the capacity and leadership of women's organizations and networks to advocate for gender sensitive development; (b) undertaking advocacy activities to bring into the mainstream women's economic and political empowerment and to promote political and financial support for women; (c) facilitating effective partnerships between women's organizations, Governments, the United Nations system and the private sector; (d) undertaking pilot and demonstration projects for mainstreaming activities benefiting women; and (e) documenting and disseminating information on best practices and lessons learned.

B. Economic empowerment programme

8. Women's economic empowerment requires that women have access to and control over the means to make

a living on a sustainable basis and receive the material benefits of this access and control. Thus, economic empowerment expands on the Fund's earlier goal of increasing women's access to income and looks for longer-term sustainable benefits in terms of changes in power relationships (at the household, community and market levels) and changes in policies and legislation that constrain women's participation in and benefits from economic development.

9. In 1996, the UNIFEM economic empowerment programme had two subprogrammes: globalization and economic restructuring, with a focus on trade and new technologies; and sustainable livelihoods, including enterprise development and natural resources management.

Globalization and economic restructuring

10. In 1996, UNIFEM continued to bring decision makers, women's organizations and the private sector together in a series of regional forums to discuss the impact of globalization, in particular with regard to trade policies, on women's sustainable livelihoods and to develop strategies and programmes through which women and women's organizations could better understand local, regional and global trade policy-making processes and plan effective interventions in those processes to benefit women. UNIFEM recognizes that it is critical to ensure that, through increased access to non-traditional skills training, economic resources and new export markets, women are able to minimize the threats and maximize the opportunities resulting from globalization and trade liberalization. For example, as a follow-up to a regional meeting organized by UNIFEM at Harare for the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), a proposal has been developed to strengthen the national and regional associations of business women in the 23 member countries to influence the trade policy process and to advocate for direct support.

Sustainable livelihoods

11. Building on its long experience with enterprise development projects, UNIFEM is seeking new and better ways of helping women to become economically empowered. Environmental concerns are integrated into all enterprise development projects as a precondition for the creation of sustainable livelihoods for women. Learning from its past experiences, the Fund is moving in two directions within the subprogramme of sustainable livelihoods. First, in recognition of the limitations of direct assistance projects, UNIFEM is increasingly supporting the building and strengthening of women's organizations and networks that enable women to take control of economic resources, to alter bargaining relationships in the home, community and marketplace, and to advocate changes in economic policies that affect their livelihoods. For example, UNIFEM collaborated with the Division for Sustainable Energy and Environment of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to develop a pilot project in the Mexican region of Yucatan called Forum on Women and Traditional Technologies, which supports indigenous women entrepreneurs and highlights and documents their indigenous knowledge. Second, in order to provide more focus to its work and to build capacity in selected areas, UNIFEM is moving towards a subsector approach through which it can reach large numbers of women facing similar threats, constraints and opportunities by providing opportunities for networking, policy dialogue, business training and sharing of best practices across sectors. For example, as part of the women's entrepreneurship and leadership development project, a pilot training workshop, "Start Your Own Business", was conducted jointly with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East for women in the Deir El Balah area of Gaza. Based on the success of the pilot project, similar training programmes aimed at linking women with credit facilities will be offered throughout Gaza.

C. Political empowerment programme

12. Women's political empowerment requires women's increased control over their lives both inside and outside the household, and women's increased capacity to influence the direction of society. As a result, the aim of the Fund's political empowerment programme is to address the obstacles and challenges that prevent women from contributing their vision to a new world of equality, development and peace and from participating in its construction under the framework of universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated human rights.

13. In 1996, the political empowerment programme had three subprogrammes: (a) gender and governance, with emphasis on promoting gender-responsive policies, plans, programmes and legislation, and on leadership and decision-making; (b) women's human rights, with emphasis on facilitating women's increased access to the international human rights machinery; and (c) peace-building and conflict resolution, with emphasis on the role that women can play in peace-building.

Gender and governance

14. UNIFEM understands sound governance to be a system of authority that is exercised through democratic institutions and linkages based on values and practices that stress people's empowerment and participation, the State's transparency and accountability and the private sector's contribution to an enabling environment for gender-sensitive, people-centred and sustainable development.

15. The UNIFEM programme on governance focuses on: gender-responsive policy, planning, programming and legislation; gender-responsive data and statistics; and leadership and decision-making. One example was the hosting by UNIFEM of a meeting of executive heads of United Nations agencies to develop a common United Nations framework in support of the Government of India's efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action within the framework of its five-year development plan. UNIFEM also supported a project by eminent women involved in the implementation of the Platform who provided the Government with recommendations on how the issues outlined in the Platform could be addressed within the plan.

Women's human rights

16. In 1996, UNIFEM sharpened its focus in the area of women's human rights, concentrating on those areas in which the Fund had a strong comparative advantage and could play a facilitating and catalytic role in the implementation of the Platform For Action at the operational level. During the reporting period, the Fund concentrated its activities on: (a) bringing into the mainstream the human rights of women; (b) combatting and eliminating violence against women, including operationalizing the Trust Fund in Support of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women (see sect. VII below) in order to begin funding projects in 1997; and (c) increasing women's knowledge and use of their human rights, with a particular focus on fostering an understanding and use of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

17. One of the ways in which UNIFEM worked to bring the rights of women into the mainstream of the United Nations system was by organizing for the annual meeting of Special Rapporteurs a briefing that focused on the integration of gender concerns into human rights reporting. The briefing highlighted ways in which gender-based violations of the human rights of women could be documented in the investigations conducted by thematic and country rapporteurs appointed by the Commission on Human Rights.

Peace-building and conflict resolution

18. The political empowerment programme has been working to expand and develop its activities and support to women in the area of peace-building and conflict resolution. That work was originally focused on African countries through the establishment of the umbrella programme, African Women in Crisis, but has now expanded to include work in Central America and Asia and the Pacific.

19. UNIFEM is committed to widening the scope of its peace-building and conflict resolution work with women in the following ways: (a) supporting efforts to ensure the inclusion of women in peace-building and conflict resolution activities; (b) strengthening and raising the profile of women's contribution in that regard; and (c) providing opportunities to create stronger networks and coalitions of women's peace organizations.

20. In Burundi, UNIFEM supported a needs assessment study and the development of a training module on conflict transformation. In 1996, 25 Burundian women were trained using that module. A module for dispute resolution that can also be used for conflict resolution and peace-building is being developed.

D. Communications and external relations

21. During 1996, UNIFEM continued to promote its work on the economic and political empowerment of women in the following ways: (a) by increasing the knowledge and awareness of UNIFEM within the United Nations system and encouraging policy makers to engender development thinking and practice; (b) by diversifying and expanding its donor base in the private sector and by building and maintaining government and multilateral donor relations; (c) by undertaking public information activities to increase the visibility of and support for women's empowerment; and (d) by producing and disseminating advocacy materials to promote policy analysis and decision-making for women's empowerment, for example through the series of publications entitled "Reflecting on experience in Latin America and Caribbean".

22. One key area of communication that UNIFEM has strengthened is its use of information and communication technology for development cooperation, through the establishment and use of Women Watch, a joint Internet initiative that provides a gateway to United Nations information and data on the advancement of women worldwide. In June 1996, UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the International Research and

Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) co-sponsored an expert workshop on global information through computer networking technology in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. As a result of that meeting, UNIFEM worked with the Division for the Advancement of Women and INSTRAW to develop Women Watch. The Fund's own homepage, which contains information about UNIFEM and its work, is linked to Women Watch.

III. Building partnerships within the United Nations system

23. During the reporting period, UNIFEM increased its coordination and collaboration with other United Nations and international agencies. In particular, UNIFEM has worked with UNDP and the resident coordinator system in providing technical support and consultation on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and on gender mainstreaming, convening inter-agency thematic groups on gender at the country level, some of which include bilateral aid organizations and non-governmental organizations, in order to coordinate technical and financial support to implement the Platform for Action. UNIFEM sees that support as a means of linking women's empowerment and mainstreaming at the country level to the United Nations system and as a way of bringing various groups, including women's organizations, non-governmental organizations, Governments and multilateral agencies, together to work towards the advancement of women.

24. In 1996, UNIFEM also participated in the Administrative Committee on Coordination inter-agency task forces on integrated follow-up to global United Nations conferences, serving as a link between the Administrative Committee on Coordination Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality and the three other task forces, to ensure that gender issues were included in the agendas of all the working groups. UNIFEM also collaborated with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on the women's empowerment component of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[b] held at Cairo in 1994, developed joint activities with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at the global, regional and national levels and worked with the Inter-American Development Bank and other agencies in planning and launching the women's leadership and representation programme.

IV. Financial management

A. Income

25. During the financial period from 1 January to 31 December 1996, UNIFEM continued the process of strengthening its overall financial controls, including the consistent monitoring of programme activities. Expenditures for programmes and projects were $14,395,000, while contributions to the Fund totalled $17,156,000.

26. During 1996, actual contributions received to the core resources of UNIFEM from donor Governments totalled $13,090,000, a decrease from the 1995 total of $15,011,000. The 1995 total included one-time special contributions by three donors, amounting to $3,479,000. In 1996, core resources increased by $664,000 over the initial estimate of $12,450,000 provided in the financial report of 1995. That resulted from increases in the annual contributions of 11 Governments, along with first-time contributions from five donor Governments.

27. The 1997 pledging conference held in November 1996 resulted in $6,384,000 in written and verbal pledges from 28 donor Governments. That amount represented an increase of $674,000 over the 1996 total of $5,710,000. Those pledges, when combined with the Fund's informal contacts with donors who did not pledge indicate that, in 1997, UNIFEM can expect to receive an estimated minimum of $13,060,000 from 56 donor Governments.

B. Re-establishment of the Fund's operational reserve and partial funding modality

28. During 1996, UNIFEM worked closely with the UNDP Division of Finance to re-establish its operational reserve and to develop a revised modality for the partial funding system in UNIFEM. The partial funding system will allow the Fund to rebuild its programme and provide for larger programmes of longer duration that can have a more sustained impact within the Fund's subprogramme areas. At the first regular session 1997, the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA approved the partial funding modality.

V. Response to the external evaluation and the strategy and business plan of the Fund

A. Response to the external evaluation

29. In 1996, UNIFEM underwent an external evaluation at the request of the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA. The evaluation reviewed the work of UNIFEM over the period from 1990 to 1995, including UNIFEM programmes and the functioning of the organization itself. The evaluation report identified several overall strengths of the organization and made recommendations for improvement. It highlighted, for example, that the Fund's programme strategy and performance had been consistent with its mandate of empowering women, and that its networking, advisory and brokering role between women's organizations, Governments and other United Nations agencies was contributing to the advancement of women. The report noted that UNIFEM required a better information management system, improved physical facilities and a reorientation towards management for results.

30. After the submission of the external evaluation report, regional and headquarters staff discussed the recommendations of the evaluation at the annual Strategic Planning Workshop and, in particular, focused on changes that might be made to the Fund's future work in view of those recommendations. UNIFEM also prepared an initial response to the evaluation, entitled "Initial follow-up to the external evaluation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women: response to key recommendations" and a more detailed response to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board dated 10 January 1997, entitled "A response to the recommendations of UNIFEM's external evaluation".

31. The detailed response to the external evaluation outlined the ways in which UNIFEM would align its programming and operations based on the strengths and weaknesses identified in the evaluation report. It stated that, in particular, UNIFEM was working to ensure that it: (a) was more focused in programming and that there was better tracking of the impact of its work; (b) strengthened itself as a learning and advocacy organization; (c) improved its ability to be an effective catalyst within the United Nations system; (d) developed into a centre of excellence on gender and development; (e) ensured that everyday management and administration was effective and efficient; and (f) strengthened its partnerships with key stakeholders.

B. Strategy and business plan

32. In response to the findings of the external evaluation and at the request of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board at its third regular session of 1996, UNIFEM developed a strategy and business plan for 1997-2000. The business plan is the critical tool in the work of UNIFEM for the next three years. It reflects the intention of the Fund, squarely set within its mandate, to focus its work for maximum effectiveness. The plan reflects lessons and observations from the organizational evaluation undertaken in 1996. It embodies the commitment of UNIFEM to support mainstreaming efforts at all the levels of its work: with Governments, the resident coordinator system and the United Nations system. Finally, the plan is directly linked to the recommendations and commitments embodied in the Beijing Platform for Action.

33. The business plan outlines: the mandate and goal of UNIFEM; the nature of UNIFEM business, including defining its work, how it does its work and with whom it works; criteria for programme selection; new opportunities and challenges in the changing external environment; internal factors; and six strategic objectives. Those objectives are aimed at: (a) increasing options for women, especially those living in poverty, through focused programming in the three sub-themes; (b) strengthening the effectiveness of UNIFEM by building on strategic linkages to field level experience and incorporating the principles of a learning organization; (c) strengthening the United Nations system's capacity to support women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in its policies and programmes; (d) ensuring that the Fund's personnel, financial and programme management systems effectively and efficiently support the goals and programmes of the organizations; (e) strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders so as to increase understanding of the work of UNIFEM and its value for women's empowerment; and (f) building a larger and more diversified resource base. The strategy and business plan includes a workplan for 1997-2000, which outlines the activities and expected results that will enable UNIFEM to achieve its six strategic objectives.

VI. Follow-up to global conferences

34. In 1996, UNIFEM participated in the World Food Summit held in Rome and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held at Istanbul and was involved in working closely with other United Nations agencies, Governments, and women's organizations on the

follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of previous United Nations conferences, in particular the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNIFEM used three strategies in that regard: (a) undertaking advocacy and providing technical support to United Nations agencies and Governments to strengthen their understanding of and commitment to implementation of the Beijing commitments; (b) supporting women's and other civil society organizations to work and strategize together to articulate their priorities and vision for implementation priorities; and (c) public education campaigns to build a constituency for post-conference implementation. The Fund's "brokering" role is often more important than the financial support it contributes to that process; nonetheless, the Fund's regional programme advisers have attracted funds from a variety of sources to support a large number of activities relating to the implementation of the Platform for Action.

35. In the work of building an integrated and coordinated approach to the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, UNIFEM has participated in a number of global initiatives. As mentioned in paragraph 24 above, UNIFEM is a member of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, chaired by the Secretary-General's Adviser on Women, and serves as the Committee's liaison with the other inter-agency task forces to ensure that a gender dimension is incorporated into their work on the implementation of conference goals. UNIFEM has also convened United Nations inter-agency thematic groups on gender at the country level in order to coordinate follow-up to United Nations conferences.

36. The previously mentioned website for "Women Watch" serves both as an information source on activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women and implementation of the Platform for Action and as a catalyst that encourages non-governmental organizations, women's organizations and Governments to work on follow-up to the Beijing Conference.

37. In 1996, UNIFEM assisted women in developing countries to put into practice their visions for themselves, their families, their communities and the world, as embodied in the Platform for Action. Technical and financial assistance was provided to Governments and women's groups in 55 countries. In southern Africa, India, Brazil, Thailand and Senegal, UNIFEM convened inter-agency groupings to support the resident coordinator system, built a collaborative approach to implementation of the Platform for Action, and brokered working relationships between Governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system.

38. As UNIFEM continues to implement the goals outlined in its strategy and business plan, it will be working to incorporate the principles of a learning organization, to improve its communication, information and tracking systems and to make strategic investments in order to obtain external resources through collaborative action. UNIFEM will continue to work in partnership within the United Nations system and to build on the Secretary-General's efforts towards a more coordinated approach to the delivery of the United Nations development assistance.

VII. Role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in eliminating violence against women

39. In its resolution 50/166, the General Assembly welcomed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action agreed upon at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, which included recommendations for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. The Assembly recalled its resolutions 48/104 and 48/107 of 20 December 1993, in which it proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and reaffirmed the catalytic role played by UNIFEM in facilitating the efforts of Governments and non-governmental organizations supporting innovative activities that directly benefit and empower women. It also urged Governments to allocate adequate resources for activities related to the elimination of violence against women, including resources for the implementation of plans of action at all appropriate levels in conformity with paragraph 124 (p) of the Beijing Platform for Action.

40. In the same resolution, the General Assembly reiterated its appreciation for the advocacy initiatives of UNIFEM, including, *inter alia*, its contribution to and participation in the follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,[c] adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, in particular with respect to efforts to combat violence against women; commended the Fund for its role in strengthening national capacity to improve the situation of women; and recommended that in the light of the Beijing Platform for Action; the Fund should review and strengthen its programme of work. Further, it requested the Administrator of UNDP to hold consultations with relevant organs and bodies of the United Nations, in order to consider the possibility of establishing a trust fund, within the existing mandate, structure and management of UNIFEM, in support of national, regional and international actions, including those taken by Governments and

non-governmental organizations, to eliminate violence against women.

41. Following the guidance provided by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/166, the Administrator decided to establish a Trust Fund in Support of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women, to be administered and managed by UNIFEM. Communications were sent to all Member States and observers informing them of the new initiative.

42. Additional steps taken to bring the Trust Fund into operation have included consultations with other organs, bodies, funds and programmes in the United Nations system as well as non-governmental organization partners on development of the terms of reference for the Trust Fund. Financial and organizational mechanisms for administering the Trust Fund have also been put in place.

43. A detailed outline of the criteria developed for the Trust Fund was provided in a report transmitted by the Administrator to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-first session in March 1997.[d]

44. Information about the existence of the Trust Fund was posted on the Internet through Women Watch and disseminated through the UNIFEM network of regional programme advisers, who sent out information on the Trust Fund to non-governmental organization partners working on women's human rights and on the elimination of gender-based violence in developing countries. Additionally, UNIFEM staff met with delegates and non-governmental organization advocates attending the sessions of the Commission on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights to inform them of the establishment of the Trust Fund. Presentations about the funding mechanism were made at various international forums, particularly at those that focused on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

45. In consultation with its network of regional programme advisers, and after examining practices of other organizations and foundations in the development cooperation field, UNIFEM developed guidelines for funding, using General Assembly resolution 50/166 and the Trust Fund's terms of reference as guiding principles.

46. By June 1997, the Trust Fund had received over $1.2 million in contributions from Governments (see para. 57).

47. Management of the Trust Fund has entailed the development of a process for appraising proposals submitted for funding. UNIFEM also endeavoured, where proposals were submitted in a timely manner, to work with possible grant recipients, to ensure that all critical information was provided in advance of the Committee meeting.

48. In order to ensure collaboration with other partners, UNIFEM organized a Project Approval Committee meeting for the selection of activities for funding.

49. The materials for the Committee meeting included background material on the mandate, terms of reference, selection criteria and operational guidelines of the Trust Fund, as well as fact sheets for each of the proposals to be considered at the session.

50. The Committee met from 20 to 23 June 1997. All UNIFEM programme staff at headquarters were invited to the meetings, as were two representatives from non-governmental organization networks who work in the area of violence against women. In order to ensure collaboration and input of other units, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, UNIFEM invited to the meetings representatives of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, the Centre for Human Rights, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division, UNICEF, UNFPA and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

51. The Committee considered 36 projects and recommended 23 projects for approval. Disbursements totalled $868,375.

52. Projects were funded in the following countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Ethiopia, India, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela. Also receiving grants were two regional projects with non-governmental organization networks and one global study.

53. The initiatives funded represent a wide range of strategies undertaken by national and regional groups to eliminate gender-based violence: educational campaigns, capacity-building of women's organizations, changing relevant laws, making women aware of their rights, public education on laws and rights of women pertaining to violence in rural and urban communities, action-oriented research, strengthening women's advocacy skills in work on gender-based violence, violence against women migrant workers and various training programmes targeting police, judges, teachers, health workers, and public administrators.

54. Most of the projects approved in the first grant cycle are scheduled to begin their activities in September 1997. Each grantee has been informed that an impact assessment of their initiative will be required at the end of their project,

in order to ensure the documentation of the projects supported by the Trust Fund and to facilitate a global impact assessment of this initiative at a later stage. This will not only help in shaping the focus and criteria of the Trust Fund itself, but provide critical information for the General Assembly and other agencies in the United Nations system on the best practices and lessons learned from the innovative and catalytic initiatives carried out under the auspices of the Trust Fund.

55. The next review of proposals under the Trust Fund is scheduled for November 1997. Additional and ongoing outreach and dissemination of the existence of the Trust Fund and its criteria is currently being pursued, in order to encourage an even broader range of proposals. Given the expansion of the UNIFEM mandate to work in Eastern and Central Europe and in the countries members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Fund is devising an outreach strategy to women's advocacy groups and Governments in that region to elicit proposals for the next funding cycle.

56. UNIFEM is preparing activities for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a five-year review of the World Conference on Human Rights and a review by the Commission on the Status of Women of the Beijing Platform for Action chapters on violence, human rights, armed conflict and the girl-child. The Trust Fund is an important contribution to the work of the United Nations in the promotion and protection of the human rights of women. To that end, UNIFEM will ensure that the lessons learned from its operational activities will continue to reflect and inform the discussions at the policy level.

57. Grants in the June 1997 funding cycle for the Trust Fund total $868,375 (see para. 51 above). Contributions to the Trust Fund as of June 1997 are as follows: Australia, $75,188; Denmark, $84,126; Italy, $118,343; Japan, $1,000,000; Malta, $1,000; Mauritius, $54.06 and Republic of Korea, $10,000.

58. UNIFEM is working to attract additional contributions from Member States to replenish the resources of the Trust Fund, in order to enable a meaningful funding cycle in November 1997.

Notes

[a] A/CONF.177, chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[b] See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

[c] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[d] E/CN.6/1997/8, annex.